

# TBASE Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

---

## Instructional & Scoring Clarity

### **How closely does TBASE align to TEA scoring?**

TBASE is calibrated to mirror TEA-style ASE scoring logic and criteria. While no system can claim to be TEA itself, TBASE provides a highly reliable TEA-equivalent holistic score and transparent criterion alignment teachers trust for prediction and planning.

### **Does TBASE replace teacher grading?**

No. TBASE is designed to enhance teacher expertise by explaining scoring patterns and instructional next steps. Teachers remain the instructional decision-makers.

### **Can TBASE be used for instruction, not just assessment?**

Yes. TBASE is intentionally built for instructional use. The feedback, exemplars, scaffolded activities, and “One Big Thing” focus directly support reteach, revision, and growth.

### **Is this AI?**

No. TBASE is a closed ASE scoring system, which is the same type of system TEA uses.

---

## Classroom & Teacher Use

### **Can teachers resubmit previously scored papers?**

Yes. Teachers may resubmit revised or updated student responses at any time. Each submission is scored individually and includes a charge. This is an excellent way to document student growth over time.

### **What is a good number of papers to get started with?**

Many teachers begin with three papers: one low-performing response, one mid-level response, and one high-performing response. This provides feedback across levels and supports differentiation.

### **Is there a limit to how many papers a teacher can submit?**

No. There is no limit. The number of papers submitted is entirely based on your instructional needs and budget.

### **How often do teachers typically submit papers?**

This varies by individual need. Some teachers submit once or twice a year, while others submit

## TBASE FAQ

multiple times throughout the year. Ideally, TBASE is used multiple times annually to guide instruction and measure growth.

### **Do teachers need special training to use TBASE?**

No. TBASE is designed to be teacher-friendly and intuitive. Most users are comfortable after their first submission.

---

## **Campus & District-Level Use**

### **Can TBASE be used to score benchmark assessments?**

Yes. Many campuses and districts use TBASE specifically for benchmark assessments. TBASE provides TEA-aligned scoring and instructional insights that support planning before testing windows.

### **Can campuses or districts standardize scoring using TBASE?**

Yes. TBASE supports consistency across classrooms, campuses, and grade levels by applying the same scoring logic and feedback structure.

### **Is there an overall analysis for an entire group of submitted papers?**

At this time, TBASE provides detailed analysis at the individual paper level. A **Class-Wide Analysis Report** that provides group-level insights is currently in development and will be available soon.

### **Can TBASE support PLCs and data meetings?**

Yes. TBASE reports are frequently used during PLCs, instructional planning meetings, and leadership discussions to guide reteach decisions and alignment conversations.

### **How often do schools or districts typically submit papers?**

This varies based on the needs of individuals, schools, and districts. Some submit during benchmark windows, while others submit multiple times a year. Ideally, TBASE is used several times annually.

---

## Homeschooling Parents

### **Is TBASE appropriate for homeschooling families?**

Yes. TBASE is an excellent tool for homeschooling parents who want objective, structured feedback on written essays.

### **Can TBASE help me grade my child's essays?**

Definitely. TBASE is designed to assess strong, organized written responses and provides clear explanations of strengths, areas for growth, and next instructional steps.

### **Do I need to understand TEA scoring to use TBASE as a homeschool parent?**

No. TBASE translates scoring language into clear, parent-friendly explanations.

### **Can TBASE help track my child's writing growth over time?**

Yes. By submitting writing samples periodically, parents can clearly see progress and improvement.

---

## Submission, Pricing, & Logistics

### **What's the turnaround time?**

It takes approximately 30 seconds to score and generate a full itemized report for each paper.

### **How are results delivered?**

Results are displayed on your screen and can be printed or saved as a PDF. Teach BIG does not store student responses, so reports should be downloaded or printed after scoring.

### **Is the TBASE system secure?**

Yes. Student names are not required. Teachers may use student IDs, nicknames, or other identifiers.

### **Is there bulk pricing?**

Yes. Bulk pricing is available for submissions of 500 or more papers. Please contact the Teach BIG Team for details. [welcome@teachbig.com](mailto:welcome@teachbig.com) or 281-549-4466

### **Does Teach BIG offer bulk upload?**

Not at this time. Bulk upload functionality is currently in development.

### **What is the cost?**

- \$5 per paper when teachers input the information
- \$10 per paper if Teach BIG inputs the information

**What is required to submit a paper?**

A passage, prompt, and typed student response. PDFs are welcome.

---

**Data, Compliance & Technology**

**Does TBASE store student data?**

No. Teach BIG does not store student responses or reports. Users are responsible for saving or printing results after scoring.

**Is TBASE FERPA-compliant?**

Yes. No student names are required, and no student data is retained within the system.

**Do we need student logins?**

No. Teachers or administrators submit work. Students do not need accounts.

**Does TBASE integrate with our LMS?**

Not at this time. TBASE currently operates as a standalone system, ensuring simplicity and security.

---

**Practicality & Planning**

**When is the best time to use TBASE during the year?**

TBASE can be used year-round, but it is especially powerful before testing windows, after benchmark assessments, and during reteach cycles.

**Can TBASE be used for professional development?**

Yes. Many schools use TBASE reports to train teachers on scoring interpretation, instructional alignment, and writing expectations.

**How many papers should we submit to see meaningful patterns?**

Even a small sample provides insight, but larger submissions allow for deeper pattern analysis at the class, campus, or district level.

---

## What makes TBASE different from other ECR scoring programs?

### What makes TBASE different from other ECR scoring programs?

There are several important differences:

1. **Built specifically for Texas and TEA**

TBASE was created with Texas educators and TEA scoring expectations in mind. It is not borrowed from, adapted from, or retrofitted from any other state or national scoring system.

2. **More than a score**

TBASE provides far more than a numerical score. Teachers receive a detailed breakdown of how the score was achieved, including criterion-level analysis and clear explanations.

3. **Instructional feedback for students**

Each scored paper includes scripted compliments, targeted instructional feedback, and clear next steps written in student-friendly language.

4. **Built-in instruction and models**

TBASE includes sample lessons, scaffolded instructional activities, and exemplar responses aligned to each paper.

5. **An instructional tool—not just an assessment tool**

The goal of TBASE is not to stop at a score. TBASE is designed to inform instruction, support growth, and help students become stronger writers.

---

## Implementation & Onboarding

### How quickly can a school or district get started with TBASE?

TBASE can be used immediately. There is no lengthy setup process, software installation, or onboarding requirement. Schools and districts can begin submitting papers as soon as they are ready.

### Is there an implementation plan available for campuses or districts?

Yes. Teach BIG can support campuses and districts with guidance for phased or full implementation based on instructional goals, assessment timelines, and staff needs.

### Can a campus or district pilot TBASE before a full rollout?

Yes. Many districts begin with a pilot group, single grade level, or limited submission window before expanding usage.

---

## Validity, Reliability & Scoring Consistency

### **How reliable are TBASE scores?**

TBASE applies consistent, criterion-aligned scoring logic across all submissions. This consistency reduces scorer variability and supports reliable interpretation of student performance.

### **Can TBASE help with scoring calibration across teachers?**

Yes. TBASE is often used to support calibration conversations by providing a common scoring lens and transparent explanation of how scores are earned.

### **Is TBASE intended to predict state assessment outcomes?**

TBASE provides a TEA-equivalent holistic score designed to help educators anticipate assessment readiness and instructional needs. It does not replace official state scoring.

---

## Equity & Instructional Access

### **How does TBASE support instructional equity?**

TBASE provides consistent scoring logic, clear feedback, and instructional guidance so all students receive the same level of clarity and support, regardless of classroom, campus, or district.

### **Does TBASE provide differentiation for different levels of students?**

Yes. TBASE evaluates student responses across multiple thinking levels and provides instruction aligned to each level. Students who demonstrate lower levels of thinking receive targeted intervention and scaffolded instruction, while higher-level thinkers receive feedback that extends and refines their reasoning. TBASE supports growth by helping students progress through thinking levels one step at a time, leading to overall improvement without unrealistic expectations.

### **Does TBASE support struggling writers?**

Yes. Scaffolded activities, focused feedback, and “One Big Thing” instructional targets are designed to support developing writers and address foundational breakdowns.

### **Can TBASE support advanced writers?**

Yes. Pattern mining, n-gram analysis, and exemplar alignment help extend advanced writers and refine higher-level reasoning and language use.

---

## Decision-Making & Budget Considerations

### **Is TBASE a subscription or a pay-as-you-go service?**

TBASE operates on a per-paper submission model, allowing flexibility and budget control without long-term contracts.

### **Can an individual teacher purchase TBASE on their own?**

Yes. Any individual teacher may submit papers for TBASE scoring as long as they have a passage, a prompt, and a student product to measure.

### **Do you offer bulk pricing?**

Yes. Bulk pricing is available for **500 student papers or more**. Please contact the Teach BIG office at **281-549-4466** for bulk pricing options or to discuss a site license for continuous use within your school or district.

### **Can TBASE be funded through instructional or assessment budgets?**

Yes. Many schools and districts align TBASE usage with instructional support, assessment, or professional learning budgets.

### **Who typically approves TBASE at the district level?**

Approval varies by district but often includes curriculum leadership, assessment coordinators, and campus or district administrators.

---

## Samples & Examples

### **Can I see a sample TBASE-scored paper before submitting my own?**

Yes. Sample TBASE reports are available on the Teach BIG website. You may download examples of student responses that received a variety of scores to see the different types of feedback, scoring breakdowns, and instructional guidance provided.

### **Do the samples include different score levels?**

Yes. Samples include responses across multiple score levels so educators can see how feedback, instructional suggestions, and exemplars change based on performance.

### **Do sample reports show the same feedback real submissions receive?**

Yes. Sample reports reflect the same scoring structure, criterion breakdowns, student-friendly feedback, instructional suggestions, and exemplars that are provided with actual submissions.

### **Can I see examples of the student-friendly feedback?**

Yes. Sample reports include the student-facing feedback so teachers, administrators, and parents can see how strengths, areas for growth, and next steps are communicated.

**Are exemplar responses included in the samples?**

Yes. Sample materials include exemplar responses aligned to the task so educators can clearly see what higher-level performance looks like.

**Can administrators use samples to determine if TBASE is a good fit for their campus or district?**

Yes. Many administrators review sample reports to evaluate alignment, instructional value, and clarity before approving campus or district use.

**Are the samples representative of what teachers will receive?**

Yes. Samples are authentic representations of TBASE reports and are intended to show exactly what users can expect.

---

## **What all can I see in a sample and in my student’s report?**

When you download and review a TBASE sample report, you will see the **same scoring, feedback, and instructional components** that are delivered with every live submission.

---

### **1. Multiple Scores That Tell the Full Story**

Teachers receive **three distinct scores**, each serving a specific purpose:

- **Raw Score**  
A direct, standards-based score reflecting how the response performs against objective criteria.
- **Holistic Score**  
An overall evaluation of the response as a complete piece of writing—how well it works as a whole.
- **TEA-Equivalent Holistic Score**  
A score calibrated to mirror how the response would likely perform under Texas Education Agency–style scoring, giving teachers confidence in alignment and prediction.

These scores help teachers clearly distinguish between:

- technical accuracy
  - overall effectiveness
  - assessment readiness
-

## 2. Criterion-by-Criterion Breakdown (TEA Five Criteria)

Each sample includes a clear breakdown across the **five TEA-aligned criteria**, showing:

- how the student performed in each area
- where points were earned
- where points were lost

This allows teachers to move beyond vague feedback like “good” or “needs work” and instead see exactly which thinking components are strong or fragile.

---

## 3. Deep-Dive Criterion Analysis

For each criterion, TBASE provides an in-depth explanation answering the most important question:

### Why did this score land here?

This analysis:

- explains how student choices impacted the score
- identifies strengths and breakdowns within the criterion
- translates scoring language into instructionally usable insights

Teachers don’t just see what happened, they understand *why*.

---

## 4. Academic Overlapping Vocabulary Analysis

TBASE analyzes:

- expected academic vocabulary for the task
- academic vocabulary actually used by the student

Teachers receive:

- a list of overlapping vocabulary that strengthens the response
- identification of missed academic language opportunities

This helps target vocabulary instruction that directly impacts clarity, precision, and score growth.

## 5. Pattern Mining: Seeing the Writing Beneath the Writing

TBASE identifies writing patterns across the entire response, including:

- **Positive patterns** (what the student consistently does well)
- **Negative patterns** (repeated breakdowns or missteps)
- **Structural patterns** (how the response is organized and developed)

Teachers receive:

- a list of patterns found
- suggested patterns to strengthen and improve the score

This allows instruction to focus on habits—not just isolated errors.

---

## 6. N-Gram Analysis for Strength and Sophistication

TBASE identifies high-utility **n-grams** (recurring academic language structures) that:

- increase sentence-level sophistication
- signal higher-level reasoning

Teachers receive:

- n-grams the student already uses effectively
- additional n-grams designed to help the student move to the next score level

Sentence-level growth becomes concrete and teachable.

---

## 7. Exemplar Level 5 Model Response

Each sample includes a fully written **Level 5 exemplar response** that:

- aligns precisely to the prompt
- demonstrates strong structure, reasoning, and academic language
- serves as a model for instruction, comparison, and revision

Teachers never have to guess what “high-level” looks like—it’s built in.

### 8. Student-Friendly Feedback (Ready to Share)

TBASE provides clear, student-friendly feedback written in language students can understand and act on.

This feedback:

- explains strengths without inflating praise
- identifies needs without discouragement
- focuses on instructional moves, not mistakes

Teachers can share this feedback directly with students.

---

### 9. Scaffolded Response Activity (Score-Based)

Based on the student’s score and identified patterns, TBASE provides a **custom scaffolded activity** designed to move that student forward.

These activities:

- target the exact breakdown in the response
- are developmentally appropriate
- align to the TBASE instructional framework

This removes guesswork from differentiation.

---

### 10. Student “Superpower” Identification

Each student receives a clearly named **Superpower**—their strongest writing asset, such as:

- evidence selection
- explanation clarity
- organization
- vocabulary use
- reasoning strength

This reframes assessment as growth-focused rather than deficit-focused.

### 11. “One Big Thing” Instructional Focus

In addition to strengths, TBASE identifies **one big thing**—the single most important improvement that will raise the student’s score.

Teachers and students know:

- exactly what to work on
- why it matters
- how it connects to scoring

Instruction stays focused, efficient, and effective.

---

## Teach BIG Training & Professional Learning

### Does Teach BIG offer training that accompanies the TBASE scoring system?

Yes! Teach BIG offers a professional learning experience called **Making the Grade**, which directly supports the use of the TBASE system. This training helps educators understand TEA-style scoring expectations, interpret TBASE feedback, and translate scoring insights into intentional classroom instruction.

### Does Teach BIG offer training that addresses the Texas TEKS?

Yes. Teach BIG provides training focused on an **in-depth study of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)**. This training helps educators deeply understand the intent, progression, and instructional implications of the TEKS rather than treating them as surface-level checklists.

### What areas of Language Arts does Teach BIG offer training in?

Teach BIG offers professional learning across the **Full Circle of Language Arts**, including:

- **Phonics** (developmental progression, decoding, and application)
- **Grammar** (sentence structure, conventions, and usage in authentic writing)
- **Vocabulary** (academic language development and precision)
- **Fluency** (rate, accuracy, and prosody)
- **Reading Comprehension** (thinking levels, retrieval, inference, and analysis)
- **Written Constructed Response (ECR)** development and scoring

Teach BIG trainings are designed to support teachers, campuses, and districts in building deep content knowledge, instructional clarity, and long-term student growth.

## How do Teach BIG trainings align to TBASE?

Teach BIG professional learning is intentionally designed to work **with** the insights generated by the TBASE system. Each training helps educators understand, interpret, and act on TBASE data in meaningful instructional ways.

---

### Making the Grade

#### (TBASE Companion Training)

##### **TBASE Use Case:**

Teachers and leaders want to understand TEA-style scoring, why scores land where they do, and how to move students forward.

##### **How the Training Aligns:**

Making the Grade teaches educators how to:

- interpret TBASE scores and criterion breakdowns
- understand TEA-equivalent holistic scoring
- connect scoring feedback directly to instruction
- use TBASE reports to plan reteach and revision

This training ensures TBASE is not just a report—but a powerful instructional tool.

---

### Texas TEKS Deep Dive

##### **TBASE Use Case:**

TBASE identifies specific thinking breakdowns tied to TEA expectations, and teachers need clarity on *what the TEKS actually require*.

##### **How the Training Aligns:**

This training helps educators:

- deeply understand TEKS intent and progression
- align instruction to the expectations reflected in TBASE scoring
- move beyond surface coverage to intentional TEKS-based instruction
- use TBASE data to identify TEKS-related gaps and strengths

## Phonics Training (Full Circle of Language Arts)

### **TBASE Use Case:**

Lower-scoring responses often reveal breakdowns in foundational skills that affect clarity and accuracy.

### **How the Training Aligns:**

Phonics training supports:

- decoding and spelling patterns that impact written responses
  - sentence accuracy reflected in TBASE raw scores
  - early intervention for students whose writing is limited by foundational gaps
- 

## Grammar Training

### **TBASE Use Case:**

TBASE criterion and pattern analysis frequently identifies sentence structure and convention issues.

### **How the Training Aligns:**

Grammar training helps educators:

- address sentence-level breakdowns identified by TBASE
  - improve clarity, precision, and control in writing
  - support growth reflected in raw and holistic scores
- 

## Vocabulary Training

### **TBASE Use Case:**

TBASE academic overlapping vocabulary analysis identifies missed language opportunities.

### **How the Training Aligns:**

Vocabulary training supports:

- intentional academic language instruction
- direct response to TBASE vocabulary overlap reports
- growth in clarity, precision, and reasoning
- movement from mid-level to higher-level scores

### **Fluency Training (Rate, Accuracy, Prosody)**

**TBASE Use Case:**

Students struggle to clearly express thinking in writing due to language fluency limitations.

**How the Training Aligns:**

Fluency training strengthens:

- language flow and phrasing reflected in TBASE pattern and n-gram analysis
  - sentence sophistication and readability
  - student confidence in expressing ideas clearly
- 

### **Reading Comprehension Training**

**TBASE Use Case:**

TBASE identifies thinking-level breakdowns in explanations, reasoning, and evidence use.

**How the Training Aligns:**

Comprehension training helps educators:

- understand and teach different levels of thinking
  - respond to TBASE “One Big Thing” instructional targets
  - support students in progressing through thinking levels step by step
  - improve explanation quality tied directly to score growth
- 

### **Written Constructed Response (ECR) Development**

**TBASE Use Case:**

TBASE highlights gaps in structure, reasoning, and explanation.

**How the Training Aligns:**

ECR training supports:

- intentional response construction
- alignment to TBASE exemplars and scoring expectations
- consistent growth across multiple submissions
- effective use of scaffolded response activities

TBASE shows educators **what is happening**.  
Teach BIG trainings show educators **what to do about it**.

Together, they align assessment, instruction, and growth—intentionally.

---

## Support & Contact Information

### Who do I reach out to with content-related questions?

For questions related to scoring, feedback, instruction, or curriculum alignment, please email [welcome@teachbig.com](mailto:welcome@teachbig.com). Your request will be forwarded to the Teach BIG curriculum team.

### Who do I reach out to for technical support or troubleshooting?

For technical issues or system-related questions, please email [welcome@teachbig.com](mailto:welcome@teachbig.com). Your request will be directed to the Teach BIG technology team.

**What should I do in an emergency regarding the TBASE system?** Call the Teach BIG team at 281-549-4466 M-F from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

### What are the websites associated with Teach BIG?

[teachbig.com](http://teachbig.com) (main website)

[learnbig.org](http://learnbig.org) (virtual courses for teachers and students)

[teachbigapp.com](http://teachbigapp.com) (OnSTAGE interactive practice assessment platform)

[randiwhitney.com](http://randiwhitney.com) (Randi Whitney's author site)

[strawberryprep.org](http://strawberryprep.org) (Randi Whitney's early childhood prep school)

[buffalonickelranch.com](http://buffalonickelranch.com) (teach BIG Ranch Retreats and Teacher Training facility)

---

**Imagine receiving all of this—in 30 seconds or less. TBASE is only a click away!**